

**FITCHBURG PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2015**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paula Caron, Chair
John DiPasquale
Paul Fontaine, Jr.
Mike Hurley
Kristin Sweeney
Andrew Van Hazinga

PLANNING OFFICE: Mike O'Hara

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:04 p.m. in the Conference Room, Fitchburg Municipal Offices, 166 Boulder Drive.

Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the January 20th and February 29th (CDBG) meetings were approved with some corrections.

ANR plans

None.

Minor Site Plan Review

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Site Plan Review - Arista Development, retail auto parts, 525 John Fitch Hwy.

John Stewart, Arista Development & Shawn Hardy, Hardy Engineering presented plan.

Test pits showed urban fill at 11 feet down, therefore can't infiltrate stormwater. Will still be sheet runoff to the street. There will be a slight decrease in impervious area.

Site will be entirely cleared. New building will be on a pile foundation, as was the Walgreens's nearby. There will be 31 parking spaces provided, 25 are req'd. Snow storage will take up a few spaces but there are surplus spaces.

O'Reilly's is building a distribution facility at Devens and will be opening several additional stores in Massachusetts. Their business is 60%/40% wholesale/retail. Will have about 6 employees. O'Reilly's will be a tenant, but not own the building. Open 7 days, hours probably 7 a.m. - 9 p.m., Sundays 9-5.

Adding a landscaped island in front, four-foot wide to property line and extends further to back of sidewalk. Board would like to see what types of plantings and where.

Stewart: They will be small plantings.

Board wants dumpster enclosure to be white vinyl, not chain link fence.

They will be using existing curbcuts on site.

Mr. Van Hazinga: Due to amount of traffic on John Fitch Hwy. look into one entrance & one exit, OR separate left & right turn lanes & arrows at exit driveway. If trying to take a left onto John Fitch Hwy. you can get backed up for several minutes.

Bill Horrigan, Moeser & Associates architects showed architectural elevations & floor plan.

O'Reilly's will have a red entrance on a white background. Split face cement block on two sides of building.

Site lighting will be on building.

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Snow storage would be on the surplus parking spaces.

Loading dock on left rear side of building. Board wants info on what kind of trucks used for deliveries, would trucks be able to maneuver on site or have to back in from John Fitch Hwy?

Timeline: Spring 2015 construction.

To show on revised plan:

- Revised driveway entrances
- Details on site lighting
- Sign type
- Type & location of landscaping
- Info on type of trucks delivering to site

Motion made & seconded to continue hearing to March 17.

Vote in favor.

Site Plan Review - Garden Remedies, 307 Airport Rd.

John McLean, project manager, Pat McCarty, McCarty Engineering & Atty. John Dombrowski present. Pat gave overview of site plan, said use is not changing and technically not required to go through a site plan review, but they submitted one as a courtesy to the Board.

The former New England Wire is an 80,000 sq. ft. building on a 7 acre parcel.

Planned changes to existing building:

Parking restriped, constructing walkway along driveway closest to building, constructing H/C accessible ramp, new security gate at Airport Rd.

They may install additional exterior lighting on building. There will be duplicate security systems.

Solid Waste: They will use existing dumpster, accessible only from interior of building.

Board wanted it screened.

Garden Remedies will use four transit vans, parked inside building when not in use. Two employees will be in van at all times.

They control all aspects of cultivation, from seed to delivery of product to their dispensary in Newtonville.

Plan to produce 1,200 ounces/month.

They have an arrangement with Century Bank, which will be their bank. It will not be a cash-only business, as previously thought.

Garden Remedies will have 14 employees to start, and 45 at full build out. They plan to fit out 30,000 sq. ft. at first, and expand to 80,000 sq. ft.

Facility will be a huge energy user with grow lamps. They are talking with Unitil. May go with the LED lights.

Garden Remedies, Inc. is a non-profit. Two investors are buying the building from current owner (there is a P&S agreement). Garden Remedies has a signed lease w/ the investors.

Timeline: Will finalize design plans in 6-8 weeks and submit for building permit. Will still need final Mass DPH approval.

Sign? They'll just have sign at the street with "307 Airport Rd" or perhaps add "GRI".

Motion made & seconded to close hearing. Vote in favor.

Motion made (Mr. Fontaine) & seconded (Mr. DiPasquale) to grant Site plan Approval with condition that exterior trash dumpster be screened.

Vote: 6-0 in favor

Site Plan Review - Fitchburg Airport, new administration bldg., 567 Crawford St.

Tom Mahoney, MassDOT, Janna Kauss, architect, Rich Lasden, Airport Solutions Group, Scott Ellis, Airport Manager, Joe Poznick, Airport Commission chair present.

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After approvals are obtained they plan to be ready to go out to bid in early March. Since plan was last reviewed by Board, minor change: Fire & Police now will have vehicular access completely around the building.

Half of the existing parking lot will also be repaired.

Timeline: They estimate 9 months to substantial completion. All of Airport offices & staff move into new bldg. Existing building will be demolished & area loamed & seeded, potential area for future development.

Discussion on architectural elevations – wood, glass and metal surfaces. Several Board members commented they like it. Board reviewed examples of similar uses of metal & wood on buildings. Some cladding would be vertical, some diagonal.

Q: Would new building (approx. twice the sq. ft. of existing) expand capacity at airport?

Joe & Scott: That really a function of a runway expansion to from 4,500 to 5,000 sq. ft., which is another project in the works.

The airport now has 8-passenger planes and more charters and corporate jets flying out of there.

It's easier to get in & out of FIT compared to other small airports in C. Mass.

Discussion about repairing fence on Crawford St.

Tom Mahoney: Mass DOT will fund repair thru homeland security grants if FIT applies for it.

Mr. Fontaine suggested airport pursue grant funding for fence repair sooner rather than later.

Ms. Sweeney: It's a good project, but what is visible from Airport Road is the fence and overgrown vegetation, not the building. Airport could seize the opportunity to improve the appearance of the area.

Motion made & seconded to close hearing. Vote in favor.

Motion made (Mr. Fontaine) & seconded (Mr. DiPasquale) to Approve the Site Plan with conditions:

- Maintain new landscaping
- Install vinyl screening fence around existing and future dumpsters

Vote: 6-0 in favor

OTHER BUSINESS

Special Permit #2011-1, St. Joseph's School, 35 Columbus St. (27 units), request to change applicant
Item deferred. Potential buyer (Chatham Housing and Development) not there. He had had a meeting last week with Mayor & Community Development staff. Mayor not in favor of 100% subsidized units there. Potential buyer asked to defer this item.

MRPC - Land Use & zoning study in "Wachusett Station" area, West Fitchburg (cont'd)

Deferred to next month as there is not yet a signed agreement w/ MRPC for Phase II of this DLTA project.

[7:50 p.m. Mr. Fontaine & Mr. Van Hazinga recused themselves because of a potential conflict of interest on the next agenda item and left the meeting]

Planning Board CDBG recommendations

Larry Casassa, Mary McCaffrey & Liz Murphy of Community Development office present.

Board reviewed w/ Larry staff recommendations per memo dated 2/6/15 and as shown on spreadsheet updated 2/10/15.

Staff tried to consolidate several programs. There's more flexibility that way. In case a particular project comes in under budget it can be used for other projects, instead of having to wait until following year to reprogram funds.

Public Bike Racks Project – They may be able to have Monty Tech fabricate the bike racks, and CDBG funds used for materials.

Streetscape Improvements: May be able to do something at Northeast corner of First & Railroad Streets, especially if building on corner is demolished. Monty Tech could possibly fabricate a decorative panels into a bike-related design.

MIHN – staff had recommended funding only if there is a commitment from MIHN to have on-site overnight supervision whenever there is more than one family residing in a unit.

Mr. Hurley suggested cutting Boys & Girls Club Transportation by \$2,500 and funding YWCA's Domestic Violence program. Larry will check w/ Fitchburg Schools and find out whether they support the project or whether it's a duplication of services.

Ms. Sweeney suggested and consensus of Board was to support the Coolidge Park soccer field restoration. Larry found out from HUD Regional office that it IS an eligible activity. Suggestion that \$10,000 seed money be put toward soccer fields (taking \$5,000 from Streetscape Improvements and \$5,000 from Crocker Field), OR, in the alternative, to get a commitment from Mayor to put any extra or reprogrammed funds into the Coolidge Soccer fields. They may be able to project under Parks & Playgrounds

All staff recommendation on p. 2 were as is. MOC Elder Home Repair not funded because of high overhead expenses for the projects accomplished. Community Development can still help the neediest cases under housing rehab program.

Spreadsheet as recommended by Planning Board:

(Modifications from staff recommendations in italics)

Public Facilities and Improvements	Staff recommendation	P.Bd. recommendation	Yr.41 Request
*Public Bike Racks Project(will be addressed under under Parks)	\$0	0	\$4,500
Coolidge Park Soccer Fields Project	\$0	<i>10,000</i>	\$25,000
Green Acres Entry Wall and Signage Project	\$0	0	\$20,000
Cleghorn Sidewalk Improvement Project	\$0	0	\$1,122,500
Sidewalk Accessibility Improvement Project	\$10,000	10,000	\$30,000
Crocker Field Grandstand Roof Restoration Project Phase 3	\$27,000	<i>22,000</i>	\$30,000
Clarendon Street Sidewalk Improvement Project	\$0	0	\$35,000
Allen Place Sidewalk Improvement Project	\$0	0	\$20,000
Parks and Playgrounds Improvement Project	\$70,000	70,000	\$65,000
*Streetscape Improvements (will include small section of Cleghorn)	\$150,000	145,000	\$150,000

*North of Main Street Pride Project(will be addressed under Streetscape and Housing Rehab)	\$0	0	\$10,000
Simonds Street Repair Project	\$0	0	\$250,000
TOTAL	\$257,000	257,000	\$1,762,000.00
<u>Public Services (15% Cap)</u> <u>(\$159,000)</u>			
Building Leadership/Inspiring Self-Sufficiency	\$56,000	56000	\$76,341.39
Drug Enforcement and Patrol Program	\$65,000	65000	\$80,000.00
Transportation Services to Afterschool Program	\$18,000	15,500	\$30,000.00
Spartacus Program	\$10,000	10,000	\$10,000.00
MIHN Family Housing/Self-Sufficiency Program	\$10,000	10,000	\$15,000.00
Domestic Violence Community Outreach & Prevention Project	\$0	2,500	\$2,500.00
TOTAL	\$159,000	159,000	\$1,762,000.00
<u>Economic Development</u>	<u>Staff recommendation</u>	<u>P.Bd. recommendation</u>	<u>Yr.41 Request</u>
Small Business Technical Assistance Program	\$20,000	0	\$25,000
TOTAL	\$20,000	\$0	\$25,000
<u>Clearance Activities</u>			
Demolition	\$29,280.97	29,280.97	\$300,000
TOTAL	\$29,280.97	29,280.97	\$300,000
<u>Rehabilitation and Preservation</u>			
Elder Home Repair Program	\$0	0	\$60,000
Code Enforcement	\$140,000	140,000	\$170,000
Code Enforcement	\$49,000	49,000	\$96,154
*Nester Building Exterior Improvements (under Sign & Façade)	\$0		\$6,000
*Homeowner Rehabilitation Program(will include North of Main St. Project)	\$80,000		\$250,000
TOTAL	\$269,000	269,000	\$582,154

Meeting adjourned: 9:15 p.m.

Next meeting: 3/17/15

Minutes approved 3/17/15

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